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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1982

INFO RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY PRIORITY 1136

RUEHZS/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 2928

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 5509

RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY 0911

RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU PRIORITY 0675

RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU PRIORITY 0234

RUEHRO/USMISSION UN ROME PRIORITY

RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI PRIORITY 1370

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA PRIORITY

RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEHRC/USDA WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//USDP/ISA/AP// PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC//J2/J3/J5//

RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DHO-3//

RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI//J00/J2/J3/J5//

RHEFAFM/DIRAFMIC FT DETRICK MD//MA-1A//

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 HANOI 001194

SIPDIS

STATE FOR G, CA/OCS/ACS/EAP, EAP/EX, EAP/MLS, EAP/EP, INR, OES/STC (PBATES), OES/IHA (DSINGER AND NCOMELLA), AND MED STATE PASS TO USAID FOR ANE AND GH (DCARROLL, SCLEMENTS AND PCHAPLIN)

STATE PASS TO USTR (DBISBEE)

STATE PASS TO HHS/OGHA (WSTIEGER, EELVANDER AND ABHAT)

USDA PASS TO APHIS

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR OSD/ISA/AP (LSTERN)

BANGKOK FOR RMO, CDC, USAID (MFRIEDMAN, JMACARTHUR AND MBRADY)

ROME FOR FAO

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [KFLU](#) [AMED](#) [AMGT](#) [CASC](#) [EAGR](#) [PINR](#) [SOCI](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: VIETNAM - MAY 15 AVIAN INFLUENZA REPORT

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SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED - DO NOT POST ON INTERNET

REF: A. HANOI 916 AND PREVIOUS B. HANOI 1070

¶1. (U) Summary: Representatives from 21 APEC economies gathered in Danang, Vietnam at the AI Ministerial meeting to once again affirm their commitment to support affected APEC countries to prevent additional human cases and new outbreaks in poultry caused by avian influenza. Ambassador John Lange, co-lead of the U.S. delegation, stressed the need for rapid and transparent reporting of cases and sharing of data and specimens. Following the Ministerial meeting, 20 Southeast Asia and South Asia-based scientists and administrators from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) met in Hanoi with the Acting Director of the HHS International Influenza Unit, Dr. Michael St. Louis, to discuss ongoing and planned HHS-AI activities in the region. End summary.

USG Activities

¶2. (U) High-level representatives from the 21 APEC economies gathered in Danang, Vietnam, to attend the APEC Ministerial on Avian Influenza. Ambassador John Lange and Under

Secretary Charles Lambert (USDA) led the U.S. delegation.

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The Ministerial coincided with the roll-out of the U.S. Implementation Plan for the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza (formally announced on May 3, 2006). Ambassador Lange informed the participants of the plan, noting that commitment to international preparedness is a key element. In his address to the forum and in bilateral meetings, the Ambassador stressed the importance of transparent and rapid reporting of cases, sharing of data and specimens and cooperation. USG delegates developed and commented on the meeting's Action Plan, which was accepted by the delegates.

¶3. (U) During the meeting, Vietnam received many commendations from delegates for their ability to quell AI in the country. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Cao Duc Phat, acknowledged the praise, but noted that Vietnam must stay vigilant to the ever-present threat of the disease and continue with plans to reduce the risk of the chance of further disease. Minister Phat introduced to the delegates Vietnam's recently released 'Green Book' (Ref B). Although it was not distributed, he noted that this document provides the road map for future actions for preventing widespread AI in Vietnam. He also noted that it will take financing to achieve the goals set forth in the plan and announced that Vietnam will hold a donor meeting in the next 2-3 weeks. (Note: The 'Green Book' was revised as part of a World Bank assessment conducted in Vietnam, in April, 2006. End note.) This meeting was well attended by both the local and international press. Reporters were even permitted to follow the delegates onto the chicken farm, appropriately clad, of course, in head-to-toe personal protective equipment (PPE).

¶4. (U) On May 8-9, following the AI Ministerial, 20 Southeast Asia and South Asia-based scientists and

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administrators from HHS met in Hanoi with the Acting Director of the HHS International Influenza Unit, Dr. Michael St. Louis. The group discussed existing and planned HHS and USAID-funded programs and activities designed to address critical needs related to Avian Influenza in the region. Dr. St. Louis held discussions on a new monitoring and evaluation activity that will accompany AI funding and solicited the group's input on the types of indicators to measure the success of the AI programs.

Other Activities in Vietnam

¶5. (U) As of May 11, 2006:

-- No human AI deaths since October 29, 2005.
-- No human AI cases since November 14, 2005 (Note: this GVN official date is five days later than date previously reported in ref tel. End note.).
-- No AI outbreaks in poultry since the last reported incidents on Dec. 17, 2005, in Cao Bang Province.

¶6. (U) Vietnam continues to actively develop national capability to produce vaccines for poultry and test vaccines imported from other countries. Truong Van Dung, Director of Animal Health, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), presented an update on a pilot project to test and scale up production of a poultry vaccine against the H5N1 avian influenza virus by two Vietnamese veterinary medicine companies. Together the companies have produced 200,000 doses. While the test data has not been shared with Post, Dr. Dung reported that the vaccines worked relatively well in chickens. The Institute would also like to conduct studies to test vaccine efficacy in ducks and one-day-old white winged ducks. (Note: Vietnam would like to become self-sufficient in the production of poultry vaccines for

avian influenza. However, current vaccine manufacturing capacity is low and, even though the Ministry has the land to build a production facility, funding to support its construction is lacking. End note.)

¶7. (U) Concurrent with development and testing of a domestically-produced vaccine, MARD scientists are testing an Italian vaccine for its efficacy in geese and swans. This work is expected to conclude in August, 2006.

¶8. (U) MARD reported that its second poultry vaccination campaign is currently ongoing. In this round, more than 70 million fowl located in 57 provinces have received the first of two inoculations.

¶9. (U) Vietnam's cities continue to conduct drills to prepare for pandemic influenza. On May 7, the Mekong Delta City of Can Tho staged a response exercise involving more than 200 personnel from the health service, police, army and local militia forces. The event was televised on local channels to enhance community awareness of the disease threat and encourage preparedness. The video tape of the event will be available for use in additional training exercises.

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¶10. (U) Despite this commitment, some are reportedly capitalizing on the availability of funds for AI response for personal gain. News reports noted that top health department officials in the Mekong Delta Province of Bac Lieu embezzled more than USD 62,000 by forging bills for equipment valued at USD 29,000 intended for use in AI prevention. The reports did not reveal the source of the funding.

BOARDMAN